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**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3, 5-20, 31 and 32 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 20 have been amended. Support can be found throughout the specification, and on at least page 14, lines 4-6. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 20 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Claim 20 has been amended to clarify the invention. Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner stated that the 35 USC 103(a) rejections of claims 1-9, 31-32 have been repeated for the same reasons of record in the Office Action dated 11/18/05 (Applicants believe it should be the Office Action of May 18, 2005). Thus, Applicant believes that claims 3, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scott in view of Reimink et al. (US 5,910,170), that claims 5 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scott in view of Gaterud et al. (US 5,522,882), and that claims 5 and 31-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scott in view of Ashiya et al. (US 5,947,925).

Three criteria must be met to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference, or combination of references, must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 2142. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection since the prior art fails to disclose all the claim limitations.

In Applicants' claim 1, as amended, the polymer is applied on all of the substrate surfaces.

Scott et al. relate to a stent encompassed by a polymer sheath such that the polymer sheath covers only the outer surfaces of the stent. Scott does not teach every element of claim 1. Reimink, Gaterud, and Ashiya do not supply these deficiencies.

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It is believed that the rejections of dependent claims 3, 5, 8, 9, 31 and 32 are moot in view of the amendments and remarks made in connection with independent claim 1. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and recite additional features with further distinguish these claims from the cited reference.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 8, 9, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Reimink et al. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gaterud et al. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 31-32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashiya et al.

Claims 10-11 and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenkei (US 4,597,767) in view of Reul et al. (US 4,263,680) and Koppert (5,089,020). Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenkei in view of Reul and Koppert and further in view of Sumitomo Electric Co. (Abstract, JP 59192366). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Lenkei relates to a heart valve prosthesis having leaflets, in a preferred construction, of a metal foil or pyrolytic carbon, or other material which will insure smooth positive sealing and biocompatibility. Col. 4, lines 19-23. Lenkei appears to disclose that a single layer material can be used for the leaflets which will insure biocompatibility. There is no teaching or suggestion in Lenkei of forming a composite for the leaflet with an additional material to insure biocompatibility, since the leaflet component is already considered to be biocompatible since it is part of an implantable medical device. Since the leaflet is considered as biocompatible, there would be no reason to look to Reul or Koppert for a biocompatible polymer layer.

Sumitomo does not supply the deficiencies in the combination of Lenkei, Reul and Koppert. Thus, a *prima facie* showing of obviousness has not been shown as to claim 10 by the combination of Lenkei, Reul and Koppert, or the combination of Lenkei, Reul, Koppert and Sumitomo.

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It is believed that the rejections of dependent claims 11 and 15-19 are moot in view of the remarks made in connection with independent claim 10. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims, and recite additional features with further distinguish these claims from the cited reference.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10-11 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenkei in view of Reul et al and Koppert. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenkei in view of Reul et al and Koppert, and further in view of Sumitomo Electric Co.

In view of the amendments and reasons provided above, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early allowance of all pending claims.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicant's attorney of record, Hallie A. Finucane at 612-334-3222.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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